

# Navy Cost Cut \$181,000,000 In 1923 Bill

(Continued from page one)

Station of armaments stopping all work on fourteen capital ships under construction and providing for the scrapping of fifteen other capital ships of the pre-war type.

"Second, by laying up surplus destroyers built during the war for conversion with the eighteen battleship fleet allowed under the treaty.

"Third, by eliminating from the list of naval vessels to be kept in commission some 234 vessels of a non-descript character of little or no military value, including eagle boats, subchasers, tugboats, yachts, motorboats and miscellaneous craft of small tonnage by the score.

"If all of these hundreds of small vessels, built or picked up during the war to meet a special need, are to be retained in the service and kept in full commission tons of millions of dollars will be required for their maintenance, repairs and personnel. No greater service can be performed for the navy than to cut out all this vast accumulation of dead wood, it does not contribute a featherweight to the national defense. In fact, it constitutes a milestone around the neck of the navy.

**Provisions for Personnel**

"We are providing in this bill sufficient personnel to keep in full commission 102 destroyers, or all that the Navy Department requested to be kept in full commission. The balance of the destroyers are a military asset of great value. They are to be put out of commission, but kept in first-class condition. This policy will save the enormous expense of personnel, fuel and repairs and upkeep of this great fleet of surplus vessels.

"Under the terms of the treaty, the United States is to retain eighteen battleships. The appropriation carried in this bill is sufficient to provide personnel for keeping all of these battleships in full commission with as large a complement of men on board as has been carried in recent months, together with 102 destroyers, eighty-four submarines, all our available cruisers, necessary oilers, tenders, airplane carriers, ammunition ships, colliers, store ships, and every other auxiliary required to make the capital ship fleet well rounded out and properly manned and officered.

"In short, the bill seeks to give effect to all reductions made possible by the work of the conference and at the same time makes ample provision for maintaining our relative naval strength unimpaired.

**Strength of British Personnel**

"It will be interesting to the country to know that Great Britain has provided in her estimates for the coming year for only 95,000 officers, enlisted men, marines and students in training schools and naval academies. This number also includes about 3,000 men in the Coast Guard service, while our Coast Guard is under the Treasury Department. It does not, however, include personnel for aviation, while the bill reported makes provisions for 2,700 men for aviation. It ought also to be said that the British figures do not include about 7,000 officers, men and boys, maintained by the dominion governments, principally by Australia.

"The whole number of officers, enlisted men, marines, students and midshipmen provided for in this bill numbers 97,600. So that the British naval establishment and ours, so far as personnel is concerned, will stand almost exactly at the same point. The estimates for the British navy, exclusive of pensions, amounts to \$54,000,000. Calculating the pound at \$4.50, its present exchange value, the British appropriations for the coming year for naval purposes would amount to \$234,000,000. This bill carries \$233,224,000, or almost identically the same amount.

"As to Japan, figures as to personnel or probable appropriations are not available. However, Japan is permitted to retain only ten battleships under the treaty. She has, all told, sixty-two destroyers and twenty-seven submarines. With such a small fleet it is difficult to imagine how she could use in excess of 40,000 men in her navy.

"It will be seen, therefore, that whether measured by personnel provided for or by the total amount appropriated, or by the fighting strength and efficiency of the ships to be kept in full commission, the bill reported to Congress preserves the 5-5-3 ratio agreed upon by the conference and at the same time translates into a reality the hope and expectancy created by the conference that the enormous burdens incident to preparation for war would be materially reduced. It speaks for the bill the whole-hearted support of the American people."

Secretary Denby's original estimate

called for 90,000 enlisted men and 6,000 apprentices. Because of the heavy enlisted cut the committee left the officers personnel—line and staff—about where it was. With the elimination of 389 reserves now on active duty and counting 200 new officers from the Naval Academy the total will be 6,666.

The navy got nearly all it asked in revised estimates for fuel, the bill carrying \$16,000,000.

The committee estimated that it would cost \$150,000,000 to complete the battleships Washington and West Virginia and two of the battleship cruisers as airplane carriers.

The bill provides that any unexpended appropriations in last year's bill shall be applied toward the completion of vessels now under construction, not affected by the treaty.

Chairman Madden of the Appropriations Committee declared in a statement that the only request by the Navy Department not complied with had reference to twenty-three destroyers, which it was sought to have kept in half commission.

"But provision has been made," he said, "for all the patrol services requested by the navy in Mediterranean waters, in the Far East and in South American waters. Every submarine requested by the navy has been provided for on the basis of being kept in full commission."

The navy, under the bill, Mr. Madden asserted, "will be strictly a 5-5-3 navy."

"Should the bill just reported become law," Secretary Denby said, "it would be a blow to the navy and to the prestige of the United States. Whatever appropriations of men and money are allowed, the navy bill will be administered by the department in earnest and cheerful endeavor to keep it as effective as possible. I feel that I should be content to a plain duty, however, if I did not solemnly warn the American people that the proposed reduction negatives the results of the recent conference, is dangerous to the country's security, and, in my opinion, to the welfare of the world.

"If this bill becomes a law it will mean that five battleships of the eighteen provided for in the treaty must be put in ordinary, with caretakers. It will mean that, having gathered the nations together and having conducted to a successful conclusion negotiations intended to establish the relative defensive sea armaments of the different powers, we from the earnestly-insisted-upon position of equality with any nation in the world, drop to second or third place. I do not believe in making a mockery of the conference. I do not believe in throwing away our sea power.

"We called the conference. We made the proposals. We should abide by the conclusions. Eighteen battleships, with their necessary auxiliaries and shore bases were adopted for our defense. With the passage of this bill our international plan goes by the board. It is proposed to cast to the winds the advice of the men who represented us during the conference and made the agreements and the advice of the trained officers of the service.

"The navy does not belong to the Navy Department. It does not belong to Congress. It belongs to the American people. My duty to warn against undue reduction in our defensive armament is as sacred a trust as any

man can hold. If the people had wanted this navy so far below the standard agreed upon in the treaty they should have said so long ago. There would then have been no need for the conference, and we would have been better off without one. What would the people and Congress have said if the conference had proposed by treaty to reduce the number of men in the American navy to approximately two-thirds of the number in the British navy and less than the number in the navy of Japan?

"This bill is a challenge to the common sense of our people. I do not believe it meets the approval of our people. I do not believe such ill-considered economy can have the support of the majority of Americans. Whatever arms may have cost, they have made and kept us a nation. If the bill passes, and we slip from the position of equality in sea power, we shall not again be able to secure support at home or abroad for another conference for world adjustments. If we would act at the first table in the councils of the nations we must have sea power."

BOSTON, April 8.—Several hundred workers at the Boston Navy Yard held a meeting on the Common to-day to protest against the reduction of the naval personnel and a possible closing of the yard.

Marching from the yard in the Charlestown district to the Common behind a band, the men carried scores of placards, some of which read: "Why not scrap the Shipping Board?" "Work on the Leviathan could be done here for \$2,000,000 less." "Great Britain agrees to scrap no ships on which construction has begun." "2,500 men are necessary at the Boston Navy Yard."



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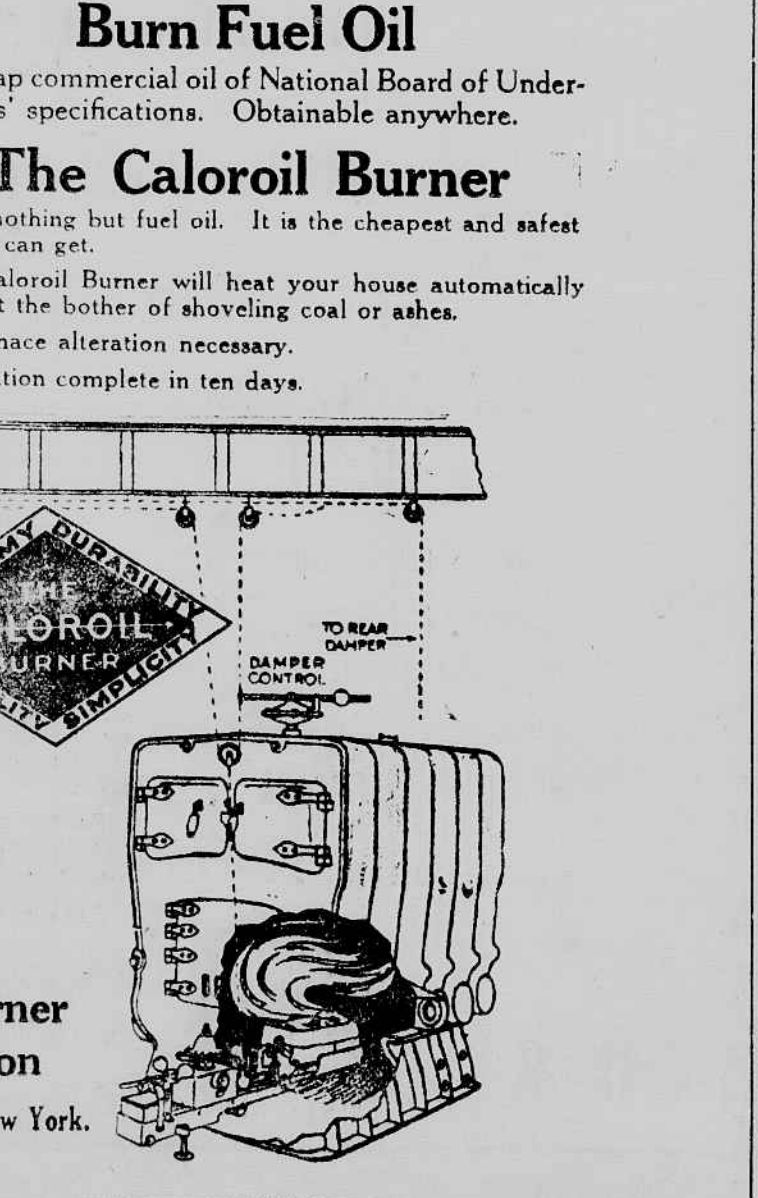
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